

## ALBA Farmer Policies

1. **Farm Transition** – It is ALBA’s policy that farmers transition out of the Farm Incubator after six (6) years, which we believe should be sufficient time to gain experience and develop a new farming business. However, no farmer is entitled to be on either ALBA farm for the full 6 years unless they demonstrate the following three requirements: 1) Capacity to pay ALBA bills on time, 2) Follow all applicable local, state, and federal laws, and 3) Comply with the terms of the ALBA land lease. ALBA will consider on a case-by-case situation if a farmer can stay on past six (6) years, provided that they have demonstrated the three requirements above, they can operate independently without ALBA staff assistance, and they provide some degree of mentorship and demonstration to beginning farmers.
  
2. **Farmer Classifications** – Farmers will be classified into three categories: Student Farmer (years 1-3 in incubator), Intermediate Farmer (years 4-6 in incubator), and Commercial Farmer (years 7+). They will have different rental rates and accessibility to services as per the table below. Advancement from one year to the next will require progression towards farmer competencies set forth by ALBA. (rental rates below do not apply to the Triple M Ranch, where they are determined by soil type and location)

| <b>Year as Farmer / Classification</b> | <b>Land lease Rate – full rate is \$1820 / acre / year</b> | <b>Equip. Rate</b>  | <b>Lease Terms</b>   | <b>Max. # of acres</b> | <b>Technical Assistance</b>                  | <b>Certificates Required</b>   |
|--|--|---------------------|--|------------------------|--|--|
| 1st Student                            | 30% commercial rate  | 50% commercial rate | Year long lease  | 0.5                    | Marketing, record-keeping, business planning | Operator ID, CDFA Organic Registration, Food Safety Certification                                |
| 2nd Student                            | 40% commercial rate  | 50% commercial rate | Year long lease  | 2                      | Marketing, record-keeping, business planning | Operator ID, CDFA Organic Registration, Food Safety Certification                                |
| 3rd Student                            | 50% commercial rate  | 50% commercial rate | Multi-year contracts possible if necessary for cost-share programs | 3                      | Marketing, record-keeping, business planning | Operator ID, CDFA Organic Registration, CCOF Certification, Ag Waiver, Food Safety Certification |
| 4th Intermediate                       | 60% Commercial rate  | 50% commercial rate | Multi-year contracts possible if necessary                         | 4                      | Marketing, record-keeping, business          | Operator ID, CDFA Organic Registration, CCOF   |

|                  |                     |                      |  |     |  |  |
|------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--|-----|--|--|
|                  |                     |                      | for cost-share programs  |     | planning                                     | Certification, Ag Waiver, Food Safety Certification  |
| 5th Intermediate | 70% commercial rate | 50% commercial rate  | Multi-year contracts possible if necessary for cost-share programs | 5   | Marketing, record-keeping, business planning | Operator ID, CDFA Organic Registration, CCOF Certification, Ag Waiver, Food Safety Certification |
| 6th Intermediate | 80% commercial rate | 50% commercial rate  | Single year lease  | 6   | Marketing, record-keeping, business planning | Operator ID, CDFA Organic Registration, CCOF Certification, Ag Waiver, Food Safety Certification |
| 7+ Commercial    | 90% commercial rate | 100% commercial rate |  | N/A | Fee for service                              | Operator ID, CDFA Organic Registration, CCOF Certification, Ag Waiver, Food Safety Certification |

3. Acreage – No student farmer (first 3 years) can have more than 3 acres. No Intermediate Farmer (4-6 years) can have more than six (6) acres. ALBA will consider commercial growers with more acreage if they have proven management skills and only if the acreage is available.
4. Accounts in Good Standing – Farmers will not be allowed to rent more acreage if they have any bills past due. They must be paid in full in order to rent more land. ALBA reserves the right to arrange a payment plan or promissory note with a farmer, however, they will only be allowed a month-to-month lease if that is the case.
5. Land Lease Rates – Rent price will be graduated for farmers' first six (6) years, after which commercial rates will apply. See the table above for the land rates. Commercial rates may be revised each year. Current commercial rate for the 2011-2012 year will be \$1,800. (Again, these rates do not apply to Triple M Ranch. Rental rates there are based on soil type and location.)
6. Land Management – Land that is left unplanted for three (3) or more months during anytime of the year or in which more than 25% of vegetative cover is weeds going to

seed will revert back to ALBA management and is no longer part of the farmer's lease. One verbal warning will be provided prior to formal written notification. ALBA always reserves the right to enter a field earlier to address a severe weed, pest or erosion problems.

7. Subleases – No farmer can sub-lease to another farmer. However, farmers are allowed to rotate their crops with each other. If farmers choose this option, they cannot exceed the number of acres in their lease and they must notify ALBA in writing of this arrangement prior to doing it. This is a way to encourage good crop rotation and resting strawberry land, which is essential in preventing disease. All requirements of the lease apply to whichever plot of ground utilized.
8. Soil Building – The land lease requires that 50% of acreage be effectively cover cropped each year. Farmers can opt out of cover-cropping 50% of their field in winter as long as they apply good compost to the entire rented acreage. Farmers need to get permission from ALBA before using this option. **This option cannot be used on the same part of the farmer's parcel year after year.** The amount of compost applied should be comparable to the amount of organic matter of cover cropping (at least 5 tons per acre). If this option is chosen, the farmer must verify their compost application with a receipt. The farmer must also request a letter from the compost supplier stating its compliance with food safety requirements and submit it to ALBA.
9. Continuing Education Requirement – Farmers in the incubator will be required to participate in a minimum of twelve (12) hours of educational events during the course of the year. The purpose of this requirement is to support farmers in their professional development. There are numerous opportunities throughout the course of the year that farmers can take advantage of in order to fulfill this requirement. For example, a farmer may take advantage of workshops and field days that ALBA offers, or UC Cooperative Extension, and attending the Ecological Farming Conference. In order to renew a land lease, farmer must provide written verification (proof) of attendance for the educational events outside ALBA. At a minimum, the documentation must provide the following information: name and organizer of the event, date, time, location, farmer's name, and verification that farmer attended. A typical certificate that is often provided at workshops will suffice. Note: annual food safety training is mandatory, see item 23 below.
10. Farmers' Meeting – Monthly farmers' meetings rotate between housekeeping meetings and educational presentations. Farmers from both ranches will be invited to educational meetings and ranch management meetings will be specific to each ranch. Meetings will generally be the last Wednesday of the month and generally in the evening (5pm in winter, 6pm in summer). Farmer tenants need to attend at least 50% of monthly meetings in order to renew their lease with ALBA. Commercial farmers attend at least the ranch management meetings, which occur every other month.
11. Organic Certification and Ag Water Quality Programs – Farmers will have to get their own organic certification once their Student Farmer period ends. By the end of their fourth year they must have their own organic certification in order to continue renting on either ALBA farm. This also applies to the Ag Waiver program of the Regional Water

Quality Control Board (RWQCB). By the end of the fourth year, farmers must also obtain individual compliance with the RWQCB.

12. Certification Costs – The cost of organic certification will be billed equally to all farmers under ALBA's certification. Farmers with their own certification will not be billed for ALBA's certification.
13. Bathroom Facilities – All farmers must have their own bathrooms for employees, based on the state law which requires one bathroom for every ten (10) workers. Farmers with fewer workers can share a bathroom rental with another adjacent farmer if they can work out an agreement, as long as the total number of people using the one bathroom does not exceed ten (10). Bathrooms should follow all state law and should be located within a 5 minute walk from the field. All bathrooms will be located in a place in agreement with the farm manager. Proof of regular cleaning is required by state law. Bathrooms must be 15' from fields if on wheels (and moved for cleaning) or 30 feet from fields if not on wheels in order to comply with food safety regulations. Hand washing stations must be located on the outside of the bathrooms. Signs with appropriate languages must be posted instructing employees to wash their hands before returning to work.
14. Hazardous Materials Storage – Farmers must use their own storage lockers, or those in the brown container adjacent to the RDC shop, for storage of organically approved pesticides (this will help them keep their pesticides and fertilizers separate, which is required by state law because of the potential flammability). Farmers should store their organic fertilizers, fuels, and lubricants in separate storage containers, which must have a leak-proof roof and floor, as well as a lock. Fuels and lubricants must be stored in an area separate from fertilizer and packaging material storage areas. All pesticides, fertilizers, fuels, and lubricants have to be in a labeled container and must have a lid or other good seal.
15. Tractors and Equipment – Farmers with tractors need to assure that they do not leak fuel or oil. It is suggested that they place a fuel pan under the tractor engine to capture any potential leaks. Farmers should park their equipment within their field, and not in the windbreaks or hedgerows. If a farmer needs to do repair or change oil, they should consult with staff to utilize the shop, which has materials for capturing any leaked fuels or oils. Any incidence of tractors leaking fuel and oil in the farm fields must be documented in the Contamination Response Log.
16. Liability Insurance – As per the ALBA land lease, all tenants must obtain general business liability insurance, listing ALBA as a certificate holder. Insurance should provide at least \$1,000,000 coverage.
17. Materials/Input Records – Farmers must update their Organic Farm Input Report (OFIR) and submit to ALBA on a monthly basis. Farmers who fail to submit their report will receive a verbal reminder, to be followed by a written warning if no report is delivered within one month. OFIR updates are always required *even if farmers have applied no inputs during the month*. Farmers with their own organic certification are still required to submit OFIRs to ALBA. See additional OFIR requirements under item 23.c. below.

18. Irrigation – Farmers will be required to sign an Irrigation Protocol MOU and receive a short training in order to receive their key to the irrigation pump. It is prohibited to make copies of this key.
19. Equipment Use – Farmers will be required to sign an Equipment Use Protocol and receive a short training in order to receive the combination to the equipment storage yard and utilize ALBA equipment. All equipment must be returned in its original condition with all parts intact.
20. Garbage – ALBA trash receptacles are for small amounts of personal trash only. They are not for agricultural trash, such as boxes, drip tape, plastic mulch, fertilizer bags, etc. Farmers are strongly encouraged to coordinate together in the disposal of agricultural waste.
21. Recycling – Farmers are strongly encouraged to recycle as much as possible, utilizing the ALBA recycling containers and/or taking them to recycle at proper facilities.
22. Business Planning – Farmers must update their Business Plans annually before renewing an ALBA land lease. A Business Plan is made up of: production history for the last 3 years, if available; including crops, acreages, and estimated profit; IRS Schedule F for the last 3 years if available; Farm financial statements (profit & loss and balance sheet) for previous year; Farm financial statements year-to-date; Projected profit and loss for following year; Assets planned to be purchased in following year; Capital requirements and sources of capital; Labor requirements and plans for obtaining labor ALBA provides written and verbal feedback to business plan within one week of submittal.
23. Strawberry Rotations – A maximum of 50% of a farm's acreage can be planted in strawberries at any one time. There must be two years (24 months) of rotation to other crops before strawberries are replanted on the same acreage.
24. Food Safety
  - a. All farmer-tenants must attend a Food Safety and Food Handling training workshop annually, whether organized by ALBA or another organization. Farmers must submit the training certificate to ALBA to be filed in the farmers' Food Safety Binders. In addition, farmers will receive annual additional training in identifying symptoms of food-borne illnesses as per ALBA Food Safety Policies.
  - b. All farmers shall comply with ALBA Food Safety Policies, which require training all employees on basic food safety and food handling. In addition, farmers shall document Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) with appropriate logs and checklists. These records must be submitted to ALBA on a monthly basis to be filed in the farmers' individual Food Safety Binders.
  - c. In addition to the OFIR, farmers must provide ALBA with Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) obtained for every product, company, and plant material supplier.